SCHOOL CAMPS AND PARK EVENTS AND MAPS

Navigating on a new map in an unfamiliar environment such as a school camp or park may require a higher level of skill than that developed in the familiar area of the school grounds. It is therefore desirable to reinforce and practice turning and thumbing the map: two skills which some children may, till now, have been carrying out almost intuitively and very approximately.

The first visit to an unfamiliar map should include playing the "Trying to Trick You" game (page 32) and a map walk: a group follow-my-leader along line features: roads, tracks, fences, streams and hedges, the children turning their maps and moving their thumbs from feature to feature as they progress.

If several controls have been put out but not marked on the maps, children can be asked to mark the location of the controls as they find them. This enables the leader to check which children really know where they are.

Most events held on unfamiliar maps will be cross-country events.

It is important that the courses set are appropriate to the level of skill of the weakest navigator because ALL must succeed in finding all the controls, though some will be faster than others.

It is better to set a series of small courses, rather than one big long course at school camps and in local parks. The children can then complete a number of courses according to their ability, and all achieve success, whether they have done three, five or however many courses.

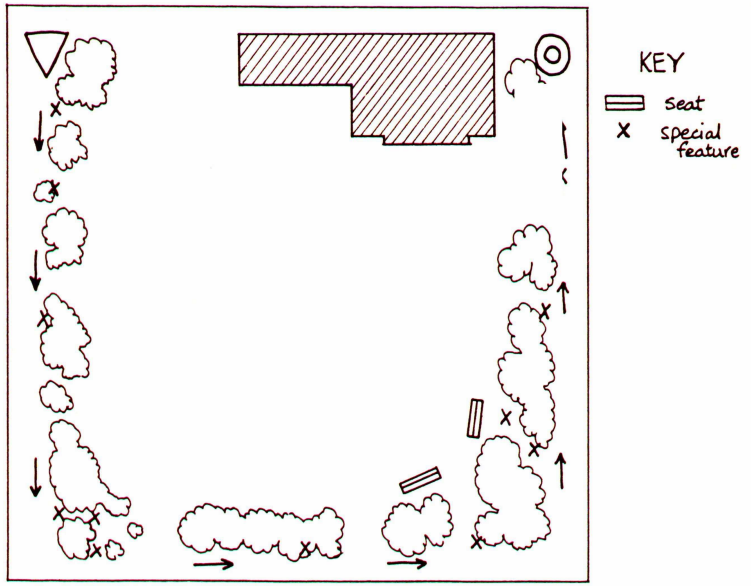
A series of courses also makes fuller use of the area and the map.

Score events can also be held at school camps, and at small parks if they are open so children can be observed at all times, and there are clearly defined boundaries.

MAP WALKS

Map walks involve the group following a leader around the mapped area, keeping their maps turned when they change direction and moving their thumbs from feature to feature as they go.

In unfamiliar areas the leader takes the group along line features: tracks, fences, streams and hedges. The children need to move around their maps when the group changes direction, keeping the map turned to fit the ground, and move their thumbs from feature to feature as they progress.



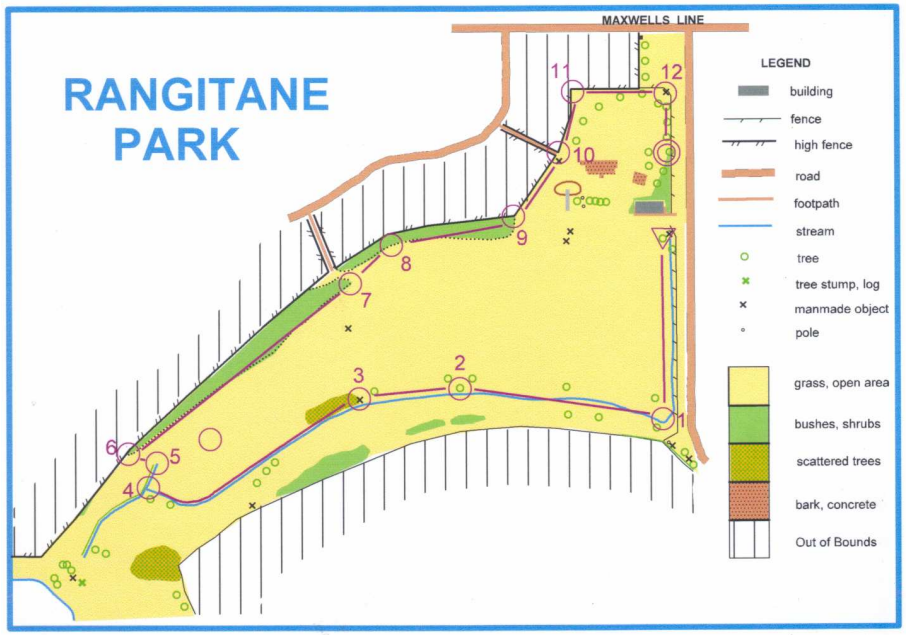
A map walk follows the route marked on the map.

Different levels of technical difficulty

Orienteering courses are graded according to the level of navigational difficulty. Each level has been given a colour name. There are four levels: White, Yellow, Orange and Red. They range from very easy through to very difficult navigation.

White Courses

The simplest courses are known as **White** or "line feature" courses. They follow roads, tracks, fences, streams, hedges, tree lines, etc., sometimes referred to as handrails, with controls clearly visible at turning points and on features along the way. There should be no route choice: the quickest route is along the handrails.



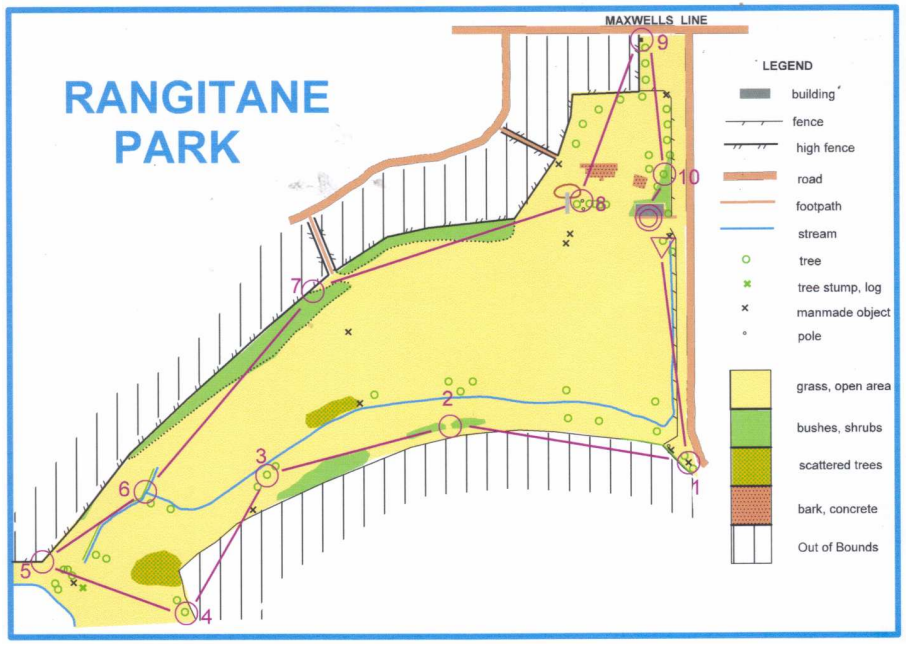
Example of a White course – it follows linear features

Where there is no linear feature between two controls the leg should be taped; that is, a tape or cord should be laid between those two controls for the children to follow.

At orienteering club events children aged 10 and under, and older children with little or no orienteering experience do White courses.

Yellow Courses

The next level of course is a Yellow course, which also relies exclusively on handrails to navigate between controls, but allows shortcuts.



Example of a Yellow course – shortcuts can be taken

Control sites are on or within 50 metres of linear features, but usually not at turning points. This gives the opportunity to follow handrails or to cut across

country; that is, there is limited route choice. Control sites should be visible from the approach side by any reasonable route.

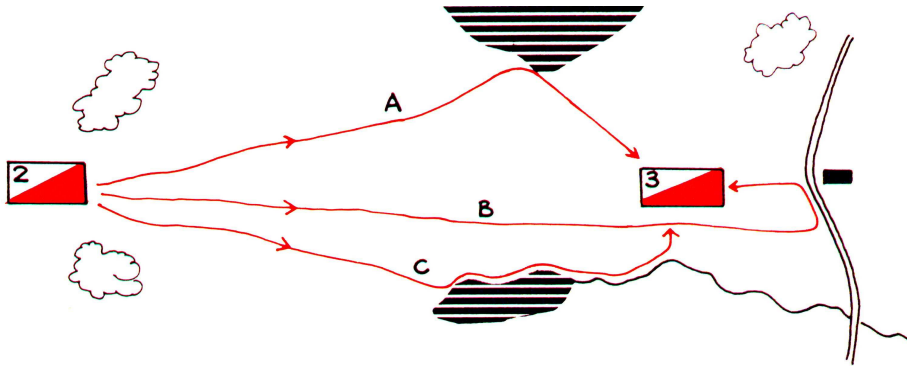
The most able students will soon be taking short-cut routes across the corners of handrail courses confidently and effectively. These students are ready to attempt courses that involve travel at some distance from tracks, roads and fences.

Students will need to be shown some new navigating skills. These should be introduced and practised in parks and reserves with clearly defined boundaries.

New navigation skills

Identifying and travelling to large features near controls before looking for small control features, that is, using **attack points**.

They will need to be shown some new navigating skills:



Aiming Off, Attack Points and Catching Features.

Route (A) uses the corner of a lake as an attack point. Route (C) does better, using first the pond as an attack point, then the stream as a line feature handrail.

Identifying and using line features: **handrails** that might help them along part of their route, for instance route (C) from the pond uses the stream.

Aiming off, ie deliberately aiming to the left or to the right of a control on or near a line feature that lies across the path of the orienteer.

Route (B) in the illustration aims right to the road-catching feature, moves left to a building / corner attack point and turns left to the control.

Using **catching features**: line features that lie across the direction of travel. Refer to route (B), which uses the road as a catching feature.

Route choice decisions become increasingly important. 'Short cuts' are more risky and may, indeed, take longer. The choice lies with the orienteer: longer and safer, or shorter and riskier?

These skills are needed for the next level: Orange courses. Orange and Red courses are beyond the Kiwi Orienteering level, and only described briefly.

Orange Courses

Courses have route choices with big attack points near the control sites and/or catching features (e.g. a track or forest edge) less than 100m behind.

Control sites can be fairly small point features and the control markers are not necessarily visible from the attack point.

The best exit route from the control should be different to the entry route, so other orienteers approaching aren't helped to find the control.

Simple navigation by contours and rough compass, with limited judgement of distance travelled required.

Red Courses

Navigation is as difficult as possible with small contour and point features as preferred control sites (no obvious attack points, no handrails, etc.). Controls are placed in areas rich in detail, and before, and not close to, a large catching feature.

Route choice is an important element in most legs.

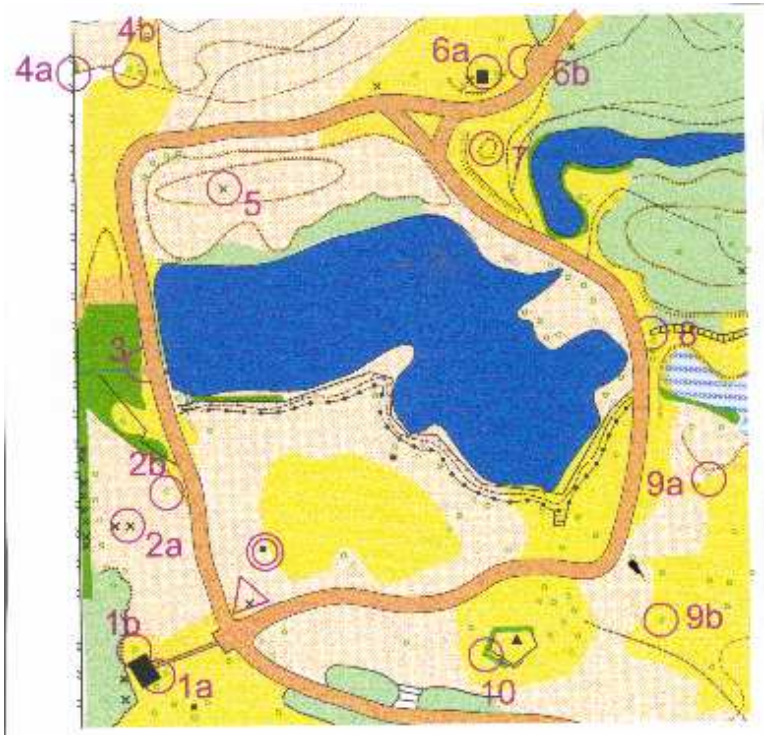
Only experienced orienteers should attempt Red courses.

Organising for a cross country event

One objective of orienteering in the curriculum is to prepare children to successfully, confidently and enjoyably complete a cross-country event in an unfamiliar environment - alone.

Final events in a series should provide for children to start at timed intervals so that they at least start alone. But this could result in a 30-member class starting at two-minute intervals taking an hour to get started.

It is not essential that all children navigate on exactly the same course. It is desirable that the children, as they navigate, think they are probably on a different course from others they see.



If, therefore, at three or more places on a course, such as the course shown here, two alternative control sites are selected every two or three controls. It is possible to draw several courses, each slightly different from the others.

Several children can then be started at the same time and the time taken to get everyone away is greatly reduced.

Orienteering clubs can help with park events

Local orienteering clubs can:

- Provide a professional colour map of your school.
- Provide maps of local parks and reserves
- Lend you flags, clippers and standards.
- Welcome schools to their regular events.
- Sometimes can organise your event for you

Refer to the "Resources" section (page 42) for contact details of your local orienteering club.

Compasses not used

Kiwi Orienteering should take place in a visually open environment so the children can see when their map is turned to fit the ground. The use of a compass is neither necessary nor desirable in school grounds, urban parks, reserves or farmland.

The skill of turning a map using a compass is not part of the Kiwi Orienteering teaching.

Compass work WITHOUT maps is NOT Orienteering